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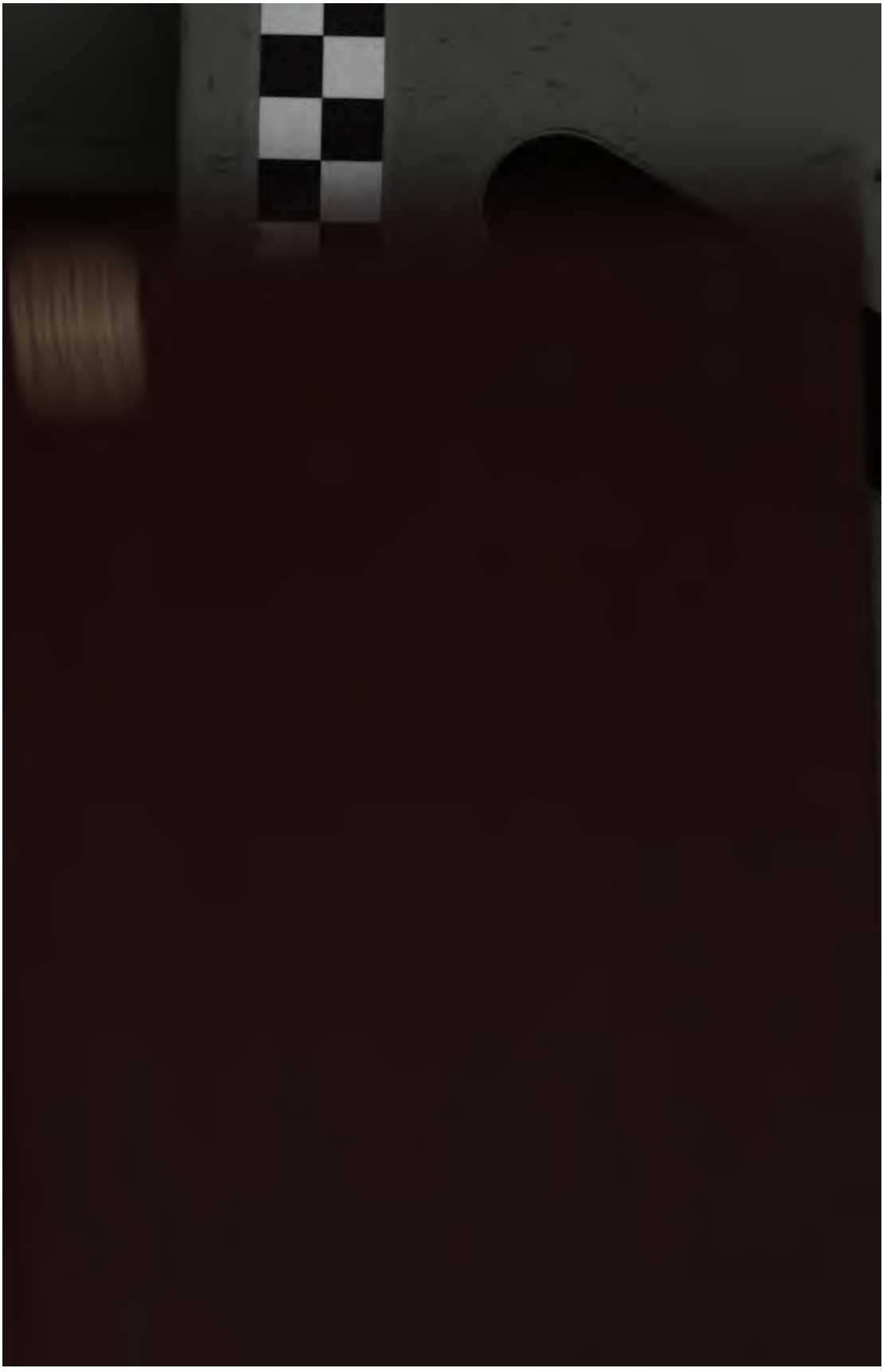

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THE BEQUEST OF

EVERT JANSEN WENDELL
(CLASS OF 1882)

OF NEW YORK

1918

MUCH ADO

ABOUT NOTHING,

AS REVIVED BY

JOHN LESTER WALLACK,

AND PRESENTED AT

Wallack's Theatre,

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1st, 1869.

NEW YORK:
1869.

FRENCH'S STANDARD DRAMA

No. LV.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

A Comedy

IN SIX ACTS.

BY WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, CAST OF CHARACTERS, COSTUMES, RELATIVE POSITIONS, ETC.

NEW YORK:
SAMUEL FRENCH, PUBLISHER,
122 NASSAU STREET, (UP STAIRS.)

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY
FROM
THE BEQUEST OF
EVERT JANSEN WENDELL
1918

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CAST OF CHARACTERS.—[MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.]

Wallack's Theatre, February 1st, 1869.

Benedick	Mr.	Lester Wallack.
Dogberry	"	John Gilbert.
Leonato	"	Charles Fisher.
Verges	"	J. W. Stoddart.
Don Pedro	"	J. B. Polk.
Count Claudio	"	B. T. Ringgold.
Don John	"	C. H. Rockwell.
Antonio	"	G. F. Browne.
Borachio	"	J. Mathews.
Conrad	"	E. Milton.
The Friar	"	W. J. Leonard.
Bathazar	"	J. Melton.
The Sexton	"	E. Cashin.
Seacoal	"	T. Ward.
Oatcake	"	W. Quigly.

Pages, Priests, Guards, Maskers, etc.

Beatrice	Miss	Rose Eytinge.
Hero	Mrs.	Clara Jennings.
Ursula	Miss	Annie Ward.
Margaret	Mrs.	Sedley Brown.

Bridesmaids, Ladies, Maskers.

The costumes, arms, equipments and furniture, strictly in accordance with the period—the middle of the 16th century.

MR. WALLACK *presents to the public of New York this revival of, perhaps, the most exquisite creation of Shakespeare's fancy, "Much Ado About Nothing," as a feeble tribute of reverence to his art, and to the memory of his Father, with whose name the character of Benedict is inseparably associated in the annals of the Stage. He has endeavored, by long and patient labor and liberal outlay, to render it worthy of the object to which it is devoted. No pains has been spared, no expenditure stinted, to carry, by the completeness of the Cast, Costume, perfection of Scenic Illusion and splendor of Accessories, and surrounding the spirit of the play with the most minute detail, and thus to advance the Drama as a national branch of art.*

Wallack's Theatre, Feb. 1*st*, 1869.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Court before Leonato's House.*—LEONATA, *reading a letter*, HERO, BEATRICE, *and* BALTHASAR, *advancing through a gate*, L. U. E.

Leon. (L. C.) I learn in this letter, that Don Pedro, of Arragon, comes this night to Messina.

Bal. (L.) He is very near by this; he was not three leagues off when I left him.

Leon. How many gentlemen have you lost in this action?

Bal. But few of any sort, and none of name.

Leon. A victory is twice itself, when the achiever brings home full numbers. I find here, that Don Pedro hath bestowed much honour on a young Florentine, called Claudio.

Bal. Much deserved on his part, and equally remembered by Don Pedro: he hath borne himself beyond the promise of his age; doing, in the figure of a lamb, the feats of a lion.

Leon. He hath an uncle here in Messina, will be very much glad of it.

Bal. I have already delivered him letters, and there appears much joy in him; even so much, that joy could not show itself modest enough without a badge of bitterness.

Leon. Did he break out into tears?

Bal. In great measure.

Leon. A kind overflow of kindness: there are no faces truer than those that are so washed. How much better is it to weep at joy than to joy at weeping!

Bea. (R.) I pray you, is Signior Montanto returned from the wars, or no?

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ACT II.

SCENE 1.—*A Room in Leonato's House.*

Enter LEONATO *and* ANTONIO, L.

Leon. (R. C.) How came you to this?

Ant. (L. C.) I tell you, the Prince and Count Claudio, walking in the thick-pleached alley of the orchard, were overheard by a man of mine. It was agreed upon, that the Prince should, in a dance, woo Hero, as for himself, and, having obtained her, give her to Count Claudio.

Leon. Hath the fellow any wit that told you this?

Ant. A good sharp fellow. I will send for him, and you shall question him yourself.

Leon. No, no; we will hold it as a dream, till it appear itself. But do you acquaint my daughter withal, that she may be better prepared for her answer, if, peradventure, this be true. Here she comes.

Enter HERO *and* BEATRICE, L.

Was not Count John here at supper.

Hero. (L.) I saw him not.

Bea. (L.) How tartly that gentleman looks! I never can see him but I'm heart-burned an hour after.

Hero. He is of a very melancholy disposition.

Bea. He were an excellent man, that were made just in the midway, between him and Benedick: the one is too like an image, and says nothing; and the other, too like my lady's eldest son, ever more tattling.

Leon. Then half Signior Benedick's tongue in Count John's mouth, and half Count John's melancholy in Signior Benedick's face—

Bea. With a good leg, and a good foot, ankle and money enough in his purse, such a man would win any woman in the world—if he could get her good-will.

[*Hero and Antonio retire up the Stage and talk together.*

Leon. By my troth, niece, thou wilt never get thee a husband, if thou be'st so shrew of thy tongue!

Bea. For the which blessing, I am at Heaven upon my knees every morning and evening. Lord, I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face!

Leon. (C.) You may light upon a husband that hath no beard.

Bea. (L. C.) What should I do with him? dress him in my apparel, and make him my waiting-gentlewoman? He that hath a beard, is more than a youth; and he that hath no beard, is less than a man: and he that is more than a youth, is not for me: and he that is less than a man, I am not for him:

Ant. [*To Hero, advancing.*] Well, niece, I trust you will be ruled by your father?

[*Antonio and Hero stand on* R.

Bea. Yes, faith; it is my cousin's duty to make a courtesy, and say, "Father, as it please you:" [*Crosses,* R.] but yet for all that, cousin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make another courtesy, and say, "Father, as it please me."

Leon. (L.) Well, niece, I hope to see you one day fitted with a husband.

Bea. Not till heaven make men of some other metal than earth. Would it not grieve a woman to be overmastered with a piece of valiant dust? to make account of her life to a clod of wayward marle? No, uncle, I'll none: Adam's sons are my brethren, and truly, I hold it a sin to match in my kindred.

Ant. Niece, remember what I told you: if the prince do solicit you in that kind, you know your answer.

Bea. (L. C.) The fault will be in the music, cousin, if you be not wooed in good time: if the Prince be too important, tell him, there is a measure in everything, and so dance out the answer. For, hear me, Hero, wooing, wedding, and repenting, is a Scotch jig, a measure, and a clinque-pace: the first suit is hot and hasty, like a Scotch jig, and full as fantastical; the wedding, mannerly modest, as a measure full of state and ancientry; and then comes

repentance, and, with his bad legs, falls into the clinque-pace faster and faster, till he sink into his grave.

Leon. Cousin, you apprehend passing shrewdly.

Bea. I have a good eye, uncle; I can see a church by day-light. [*Music within.*

Leon. The revellers are entering.

[*Retire up the stage.—Music.*

Enter DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, BALTHASAR, DON JOHN BORACHIO, CONRAD, MARGARET, URSULA, *and others masked.*

Pedro. Lady, will you walk about with your friend?

Hero. So you walk softly, and look sweetly, and say nothing, I am yours for the walk; and, especially, when I walk away.

Pedro. With me in your company.

Hero. I may so, when I please.

Pedro. And when please you to say so?

Hero. When I like your favour; for Heaven defend the lute should be like the case!

Pedro. My visor is Philemon's roof; within the house is Jove.

Hero. Why, then, your visor should be thatched.

Pedro. Speak low, if you speak love.

Enter BENEDICK, L. U. E., *followed by* BEATRICE, *laughing*

Bea. (L. C.) Will you not tell me who told you so?

Ben. (C.) No, you shall pardon me.

Bea. Nor will you not tell me who you are?

Ben. Not now. [*Pedro and Hero stand* R.

Bea. That I was disdainful—and that I had my good wit out of the hundred merry tales;—Well, this was Signior Benedick that said so.

Ben. What's he?

Bea. I am sure you know him well enough.

Ben. Not I, believe me.

Bea. Did he never make you laugh?

Ben. I pray you, what is he?

Bea. Why, he is the prince's jester: a very dull fool; only his gift is in devising impossible slanders; none but libertines delight in him; and the commendation is not in

his wit, but in his villainy; for he both pleaseth men and angers them, and then they laugh at him, and beat him;

Ben. When I know the gentleman, I'll tell him what you say.

Bea. Do, do; he'll but break a comparison or two on me; which, peradventure, not marked, or not laughed at, strikes him into melancholy; and then there's a partridge wing saved, for the fool will eat no supper that night.

[*The company beginning to leave the room.*

We must follow the leaders.

[*Music.—Exeunt all but Don John, Borachio, and Claudio.*

John. (L. C.) Sure my brother is amorous on Hero, and hath withdrawn her father, to break with him about it: the ladies follow her, and but one visor remains.

Bor. (L. C.) And that is Claudio; I know him by his bearing.

John. Are not you Signior Benedick?

Claud. You know me well: I am he.

John. Signior, you are very near my brother in his love: he is enamoured on Hero; I pray you, dissuade him from her, she is no equal for his birth; you may do the part of an honest man in it.

Claud. How know you he loves her?

John. I heard him swear his affection.

Bor. So did I too; and he swore he would marry her to-night.

John. Come, let us to the banquet.

[*Exeunt Don John and Borachio,* L.

Claud. Thus answer I, in name of Benedick,
But hear these ill news with the ears of Claudio—
'Tis certain so;—The prince woos for himself.
Friendship is constant in all other things,
Save in the office and affairs of love:
Therefore, all hearts in love use their own tongues;
Let every eye negotiate for itself,
And trust no agent; for beauty is a witch,
Against whose charms faith melteth into blood.
This is an accident of hourly proof,
Which I mistrusted not: farewell, therefore, Hero.

Enter BENEDICK, L.

Ben. (L. C.) Count Claudio?

Claud. (R. C.) Yea, the same.

Ben. Come, will you go with me?

Claud. Whither?

Ben. Even to the next willow, about your own business, Count. What fashion will you wear the garland of? About your neck, like a usurer's chain? or under your arm, like a lieutenant's scarf? You must wear it one way, for the prince hath got your Hero.

Claud. I wish him joy of her.

Ben. Why, that's spoken like an honest drover; so they sell bullocks. But did you think the prince would have served you thus?

Claud. I pray you, leave me.

Ben. Ho! now you strike like the blind man; 'twas the boy that stole your meat, and you'll beat the post.

Claud. If it will not be, I'll leave you.

[*Exit Claudio,* L.

Ben. Alas, poor hurt fowl! Now will he creep into sedges.—But, that my Lady Beatrice should know me, and not know me! The prince's fool!—Ha! it may be I go under that title, because I am merry. Yea; but so: I am apt to do myself wrong: I am not so reputed: it is the base, though bitter, disposition of Beatrice, that puts the world into her person, and so gives me out. Well, I'll be revenged as I may.

Enter DON PEDRO, R.

Pedro. Now, Signior, where's the Count? Did you see him?

Ben. (C.) Troth, my lord, I played the part of Lady Fame. I found him here as melancholy as a lodge in a warren; I told him, and, I think, I told him true, that your grace had got the good will of his young lady; and I offered him my company to a willow tree, either to make him a garland, as being forsaken, or to bind him up a rod, as being worthy to be whipped.

Pedro. (R. C.) To be whipped! what's his fault?

Ben. The flat transgression of a school-boy; who, being overjoyed with finding a bird's nest, shows it his companion, and he steals it.

Pedro. Wilt thou make a trust a transgression? The transgression is in the stealer.

Ben. Yet it had not been amiss, the rod had been made, and the garland, too; for the garland he might have worn himself; and the rod he might have bestowed on you, who, as I take it, have stolen his birds' nest.

Pedro. I will but teach them to sing, and restore them to the owner.

Ben. If their singing answer your saying, by my faith, you say honestly.

Pedro. The Lady Beatrice hath a quarrel to you; the gentleman, that danced with her, told her, she is much wronged by you.

Ben. Wronged! she wronged! she misused me past the endurance of a block! an oak, but with one green leaf on it, would have answered her; my very visor began to assume life, and scold with her! She told me, not thinking I had been myself, that I was the prince's jester; and that I was duller than a great thaw; huddling jest upon jest, with such impossible conveyance, upon me, that I stood like a man at a mark, with a whole army shooting at me! She speaks poniards, and every word stabs: I would not marry her, though she were endowed with all that Adam had left before he transgressed: she would have made Hercules have turned spit; yea, and have cleft his club, to make the fire, too. I would to Heaven, some scholar would conjure her: for, certainly, while she is here, a man may live as quiet in hell, as in a sanctuary, and people sin upon purpose, because they would go thither; so, indeed, all disquiet, horror, and perturbation follows her.

Bea. Leon. Claud. and Hero. [*Within.*] Ha! ha! ha!

Pedro. Look, here she comes.

Ben. Will your grace command me any service to the world's end? I will go on the slightest errand, now, to the Antipodes, that you can devise to send me on; I will fetch you a tooth-picker now from the farthest inch of Asia; bring you the length of Prester John's foot; fetch you a hair off the great Cham's beard; do you any embassage to the Pigmies, rather than hold three words' conference with this harpy: You have no employment for me?

Pedro. None, but to desire your good company.

Ben. Oh, lord, sir, here's a dish I love not; I cannot endure my Lady Tongue. [*Exit Benedick,* R.

Enter BEATRICE, LEONATO, CLAUDIO, *and* HERO, L.

Pedro. (L. C.) Come, lady, come; you have lost the heart of Signior Benedick. You have put him down, lady, you have put him down.

Bea. (L.) So I would not he should do me, my lord lest I should prove the mother of fools. I have brought Count Claudio, whom you sent me to seek.

Pedro. Why, how now, Count? wherefore are you sad?

Claud. (C.) Not sad, my lord.

Pedro. How, then—sick?

Claud. Neither, my lord.

Bea. The Count is neither sad, nor sick, nor merry, nor well: but civil, Count; civil as an orange, and something of that jealous complexion.

Pedro. I'faith, lady, I think your blazon to be true; though, I'll be sworn, if he be so, his conceit is false. Here, Claudio, I have wooed in thy name, and fair Hero is won; I have broke with her father, and his good-will obtained: name the day of marriage, and Heaven give thee joy!

Leon. Count, take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes; his grace hath made the match, and all grace say amen to it!

Bea. Speak, Count, 'tis your cue.

Claud. Silence is the perfectest herald of joy: I were but little happy, if I could say how much. Lady, [*Beatrice sighs,*] as you are mine, I am yours: I give away myself for you, and dote upon the exchange.

Bea. Speak, cousin; or, if you cannot, stop his mouth with a kiss, and let him not speak, neither.

Pedro. In faith, lady, you have a merry heart.

Bea. Yea, my lord; I thank it, poor fool, it keeps on the windy side of care. My cousin tells him in his ear that he is in her heart.

Claud. And so she doth, cousin.

Bea. Good lord, for alliance! Thus goes every one to the world, but I, and I am sun-burned! I may sit in a corner, and cry, "Heigho, for a husband!"

Pedro. (R.) Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

Bea. I would rather have one of your father's getting

Hath your grace ne'er a brother like you? Your father got excellent husbands, if a maid could come by them.

Pedro. Will you have me, lady?

Bea. No, my lord, unless I might have another for working days; your grace is too costly to wear every day:—But, I beseech your grace, pardon me; I was born to speak all mirth, and no matter.

Pedro. Your silence most offends me; and to be merry best becomes you; for, out of question, you were born in a merry hour.

Bea. No, sure, my lord, my mother cried; but then there was a star danced, and under that I was born. Cousins, Heaven give you joy!

Leon. Niece, will you look to those things I told you of?

Bea. [*Crossing*, R.] I cry you mercy, uncle. By your grace's pardon. [*Exit*, R.

Pedro. By my troth, a pleasant-spirited lady! Count Claudio, when mean you to go to church?

Claud. To-morrow, my lord: Time goes on crutches, till love have all his rites.

Leon. Not till Monday, my dear son; and a time too brief, too, to have all things answer my mind.

Pedro. (R.) Come, you shake the head at so long a breathing; but I warrant thee, Claudio, the time shall not go dully by us. I will, in the interim, undertake one of Hercules' labours; which is, to bring the Signior Benedick and the Lady Beatrice into a mountain of affection, the one with the other. I would fain have it a match; and I doubt not to fashion it, if you three will but minister such assistance as I shall give you direction.

Leon. My lord, I am for you, if it cost me ten nights' watchings.

Claud. (L.) And I, my lord.

Pedro. (R.) And you, too, gentle Hero?

Hero. I will do any modest office, my lord, to help my cousin to a good husband.

Pedro. And Benedick is not the unhopefullest husband that I know: thus far can I praise him; he is of a noble strain, of approved valour, and confirmed honesty. I will teach you how to humour your cousin, that she shall fall in love with Benedick: and I, with your two helps, will

so practise on Benedick, that, in despite of his quick wit and queasy stomach, he shall fall in love with Beatrice. If we can do this, Cupid is no longer an archer; his glory shall be ours, for we are the only love-gods. Go in with me, and I will tell you my drift. [*Exeunt*, L.

Enter DON JOHN *and* BORACHIO, R.

John. (L.) It is so: the Count Claudio shall marry the daughter of Leonato.

Bor. (C.) Yea, my lord; but I can cross it.

John. Any bar, any cross, any impediment, will be medicinable to me: I am sick in displeasure to him; and whatsoever comes athwart his affection, ranges evenly with mine. How can'st thou cross this marriage?

Bor. Not honestly, my lord; but so covertly, that no dishonesty shall appear in me.

John. Show me briefly how.

Bor. I think I told your lordship a year since how much I am in the favour of Margaret, the waiting gentlewoman to Hero.

John. I remember.

Bor. I can, at any unseasonable instant of the night, appoint her to look out at her lady's chamber window.

John. What life is in that, to be the death of this marriage?

Bor. The poison of that lies in you to temper. Go you to the prince, your brother; spare not to tell him, that he hath wronged his honour in marrying the renowned Claudio, whose estimation you do mightily hold up, to a contaminated stale, such a one as Hero.

John. What proof shall I make of that?

Bor. Proof enough to misuse the prince, to vex Claudio, to undo Hero, and kill Leonato: Look you for any other issue?

John. Only to despite them, I will endeavour anything.

Bor. Go, then, find me a meet hour to draw Don Pedro and the Count Claudio alone: tell them that you know that Hero loves me; intend a kind of zeal both to the Prince and Claudio, as—in love of your brother's honour, who hath made this match; and his friend's reputation,

who is thus like to be cozened with the semblance of a maid,—that you have discovered thus. They will scarcely believe this without trial: offer them instances; which shall bear no less likelihood, than to see me at her chamber window; hear me call Margaret, Hero; hear Margaret term me Borachio! and bring them to see this the very night before the intended wedding; for, in the mean time, I will so fashion the matter, that Hero shall be absent; and there shall appear such seeming truth of Hero's disloyalty, that jealousy shall be called assurance, and all the preparation overthrown.

John. Grow this to what adverse issue it can, I will put it in practice: be cunning in the working this, and thy fee is a thousand ducats.

Bor. Be you constant in the accusation, and my cunning shall not shame me.

John. I will presently go learn their day of marriage.

[*Exeunt, Borachio,* R., *John,* L.

ACT. III.—*Leonato's Garden.*

Enter BENEDICK *and a boy.*

Ben. Boy!

Boy. Signior.

Ben. In my chamber window lies a book; bring it hither to me in the orchard. I do much wonder that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviours to love, will, after he hath laughed at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn, by falling in love: and such a man is Claudio. I have known when there was no music with him but the drum and the fife; and now had he rather hear the tabor and the pipe: I have known when he would have walked ten mile afoot, to see a good armour; and now will he lie ten nights awake, carving the fashion of a new doublet. He was wont to speak plain, and to the purpose, like an honest man and a soldier; and now he is turned orthographer; his words are a very fantastical banquet, just so many strange dishes. May I be so converted, and see with these eyes? I cannot tell; I think not: I will not be sworn, but love may transform me to an oyster; but I'll take my oath on it, till he have made an oyster of me, he shall never make me such a fool. One woman is fair—yet I am well: another is wise—yet I am well: another virtuous—yet I am well: but till all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not

come in my grace. Rich she shall be, that's certain; wise, or I'll none: virtuous, or I'll never cheapen her; fair, or I'll never look on her; mild, or come not near me; noble, or not I; of good discourse, an excellent musician, and her hair shall be of whatever colour it please Heaven. Ha! the Prince, and Monsieur Love! I will hide me in the arbour. [*Withdraws.*

Enter, R. U. E., DON PEDRO, LEONATO, CLAUDIO, BALTHASAR, *and* SINGERS.—*Don Pedro, &c., stand* R., *Singers stand* L.

Pedro. Come, shall we hear this music?

Claud. Yea, my good lord:—how still the evening is,
As hushed on purpose to grace harmony!

Pedro. See you where Benedick hath hid himself?
Come, Balthasar, we'll hear that song again.

GLEE.

Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,
Men were deceivers ever;
One foot in sea, and one on shore;
To one thing constant never.

Then sigh not so,
But let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny;
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into hey nonny, nonny.

Sing no more ditties, sing no mo',
Of dumps so dull and heavy;
The fraud of men was ever so,
Since summer first was leavy.
Then sigh not so, &c.

Pedro. Dost thou hear, Balthasar? I pray thee, get us some excellent music; for, to-morrow night, we would have it at the Lady Hero's chamber window.

Bal. The best I can, my lord.

Pedro. Do so; farewell! [*Exeunt Balthasar and Singers*, L.] Come hither, Leonato: What was it you told me of to-day? that your niece, Beatrice, was in love with Signior Benedick? [*They sit.*

Claud. Oh, ay! [*Aside.*] Stalk on, stalk on; the fowl sits. I did never think that lady would have loved any man.

Leon. No, nor I neither; but most wonderful that she should so dote on Signior Benedick, whom she hath, in all outward behaviours, seemed ever to abhor.

Ben. [*Listening at* R. U. E.] Is't possible? Sits the wind in that corner?

Leon. By my troth, my lord, I cannot tell what to think of it; but that she loves him with an enraged affection—it is past the infinite of thought.

Pedro. May be she doth but counterfeit.

Claud. 'Faith, like enough.

Leon. Counterfeit! There never was counterfeit of passion came so near the life of passion as she discovers it.

Pedro. Why, what effects of passion shows she?

Claud. [*Aside.*] Bait the hook well: this fish will bite.

Leon. What effects, my lord! She will sit you—You heard my daughter tell you how.

Claud. She did, indeed.

Pedro. How, how, I pray you? You amaze me! I would have thought her spirit had been invincible against all assaults of affection.

Leon. I would have sworn it had, my lord; especially against Benedick.

Ben. I should think this a gull, but that the white-bearded fellow speaks it: knavery cannot, sure, hide himself in such reverence.

Claud. [*Aside.*] He hath ta'en the affection; hold it up.

Pedro. Hath she made her affection known to Benedick?

Leon. No; and swears she never will: that's her torment.

Ben. So, so!

Leon. My daughter says, the ecstacy hath so much overborne her, that she is sometime afraid she will do desperate outrage to herself.

Pedro. It were good, if Benedick knew of it by some other, if she will not discover it. I pray you, tell Benedick of it, and hear what he will say.

Leon. Were it good, think you?

Pedro. 'Tis very possible he'll scorn it; for the man, as you all know, hath a contemptible spirit. I am sorry for your niece. Shall we see Benedick, and tell him of her love?

Ben. Very well!

Claud. Never tell him, my lord; let her wear it out with good counsel.

Leon. Nay, that's impossible; she may wear her heart out first.

Pedro. Well, we will hear farther of it by your daughter; let it cool the while. I love Benedick well; and I could wish he would modestly examine himself, to see how much he is unworthy so good a lady. [*Bell rings.*

Leon. My lord, will you walk? dinner is ready.

[*They rise.*

Claud. [*Aside.*] If he do not dote on her upon this, I will never trust my expectation.

Pedro. [*Aside.*] Let there be the same net spread for her, and that must your daughter and her gentlewoman carry. The sport will be, when they hold an opinion of one another's dotage, and no such matter; that's the scene that I would see.—Let us send her to call him to dinner.

[*Exeunt,* R.

Ben. [*Advances softly to* C.] This can be no trick: The conference was sadly borne. They have the truth of this from Hero. They seem to pity the lady; it seems her affections have their full bent. Love me! why, it must be requited. I hear how I am censured; they say, I will bear myself proudly, if I perceive the love come from her: they say, too, that she will rather die than give any sign of affection. I did never think to marry:—[*Crosses to* R.] I must not seem proud: happy are they that hear their detractions, and can put them to mending. They say, the lady is fair; [*Returns to* C.] 'tis a truth, I can bear them witness: and virtuous;—'tis so, I cannot reprove it: and wise—but for loving me:—By my troth, it is no addition to her wit:—nor no great argument of her folly, for I will be horribly in love with her. I may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of wit broken on me, because I have railed so long against marriage. But doth not the appetite alter? A man loves the meat in his youth, that he cannot endure in his age. Shall quips, and sentences,, and these paper bullets of the brain, awe a man from the career of his humour? No: the world must be peopled. [*Walks about, agitated.*] When I said, I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married. Here comes Beatrice. By this

day, she's a fair lady. [*Takes off his hat and wipes it—adjusts his dress.*] I do spy some marks of love in her.

Enter BEATRICE, R.

Bea. (R.) Against my will, I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.

Ben. (L. C.) Fair Beatrice, I thank you for your pains.

Bea. I took no more pains for those thanks, than you took pains to thank me; if it had been painful, I would not have come.

Ben. You take pleasure, then, in the message?

Bea. Yea, just so much as you may take upon a knife's point, and choke a daw withal. You have no stomach, signior? fare you well. [*Exit,* R.

Ben. Ha! "Against my will, I am sent to bid you come in to dinner;"—there's a double meaning in that. "I took no more pains for those thanks, than you took pains to thank me"—that's as much as to say, "Any pains that I take for you is as easy as thanks." If I do not take pity on her, I am a villain; if I do not love her, I am a Jew: —I will go get her picture. [*Exit,* R.

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Leonato's Garden.*

Enter HERO, MARGARET, *and* URSULA, L.

Hero. (R. C.) Good Margaret, run thee into the parlour,
There shalt thou find my cousin, Beatrice;
Whisper her ear, and tell her, I and Ursula
Walk in the orchard, and our whole discourse
Is all of her; say, that thou overheard'st us;
And bid her steal into the garden here,
To listen our propose: This is thy office:
Bear thee well in it, and leave us alone.
[*Exit Margaret,* L.
(R.) Now, Ursula, when Beatrice doth come,
Our talk must only be of Benedick:
When I do name him, let it be thy part
To praise him more than ever man did merit:

My talk to thee must be, how Benedick
Is sick in love with Beatrice: of this matter
Is little Cupid's crafty arrow made,
That only wounds by hearsay.

Enter BEATRICE, R., *and retires back on* R.

[*Aside.*] Now begin;
For look where Beatrice, like a lapwing, runs
Close by the ground, to hear our conference.

Urs. (C.) [*Aside.*] Fear you not my part of the dialogue.

Hero. (C.) No, truly, Ursula, she is too disdainful;
I know, her spirits are as coy and wild
As haggards of the rock.

Urs. But are you sure,
That Benedick loves Beatrice so entirely?

Hero. So says the prince, and my new-trothéd lord.
They did entreat me to acquaint her of it:
But I persuaded him, if they loved Benedick,
To wish him wrestle with affection,
And never to let Beatrice know of it.

Urs. Why did you so? Doth not the gentleman
Deserve as full, as fortunate a bed,
As ever Beatrice shall couch upon?

Hero. O, God of Love! I know, he doth deserve
As much as may be yielded to a man:
But nature never framed a woman's heart
Of prouder stuff than that of Beatrice;
Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes,
Misprising what they look on; and her wit
Values itself so highly, that to her
All matter else seems weak: she cannot love,
Nor take no shape, nor project of affection,
She is so self-endeared.

Urs. Sure, I think so;
And therefore, certainly, it were not good
She knew his love, lest she make sport at it.

Hero. Why, you speak truth: I never yet saw man
How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featured,
But she would spell him backward: if fair-faced,
She'd swear, the gentleman should be her sister;
If black, why, nature, drawing of an antic,
Made a foul blot; if tall, a lance ill-headed;

If low, an agate very vilely cut:
If speaking, why, a vane blown with all winds;
If silent, why, a block moved with none.
So turns she every man the wrong side out;
And never gives to truth and virtue, that
Which simpleness and merit purchaseth.

Urs. Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable.

Hero. But who dare tell her so? If I should speak,
She'd mock me into air; Oh, she would laugh me
Out of myself, press me to death with wit.
Therefore let Benedick, like covered fire,
Consume away in sighs, waste inwardly:
It were a better death than die with mocks.

Urs. Yet tell her of it; hear what she will say.

Hero. No, rather will I go to Benedick,
And counsel him to fight against his passion:
And, truly, I'll devise some honest slanders
To stain my cousin with: one doth not know
How much an ill word may impoison liking.

Urs. Oh, do not do your cousin such a wrong;
She cannot be so much without true judgment,
Having so swift and excellent a wit,
As she is prized to have, as to refuse
So rare a gentleman as Signior Benedick.

Hero. Indeed, he hath an excellent good name.

Urs. His excellence did earn it, ere he had it.—
When are you married, madam?

Hero. Why, every day;—to-morrow.

Urs. [*Aside.*] She's limed, I warrant you; we have caught her, madam.

Hero. [*Aside.*] If it proves so, then loving goes by haps:
Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps.

[*Exeunt Hero and Ursula,* R.—*Beatrice advances cautiously.*

Bea. What fire is in mine ears? Can this be true?
Stand I condemned for pride and scorn so much?
Contempt, farewell! and maiden pride, adieu!
No glory lives behind the back of such.
And, Benedick, love on, I will requite thee:
Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand;—
If thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee
To bind our loves up in a holy band:

For others say, thou dost deserve; and I
Believe it better than reportingly. [*Exit*, R.

SCENE II.—*A Hall in Leonato's House.*

Enter DON PEDRO, LEONATO, CLAUDIO, *and* BENEDICK, L

Pedro. (R.) I do but stay till your marriage be consummate, and then I go toward Arragon.

Claud. [*Crossing*, R.] I'll bring you thither, my lord, if you'll vouchsafe me.

Pedro. (C.) Nay, I will only be bold with Benedick for his company; for, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, he is all mirth; he hath twice or thrice cut Cupid's bow-string, and the little hangman dare not shoot at him; he hath a heart as sound as a bell, and his tongue is the clapper; for what his heart thinks his tongue speaks.

Ben. Gallants, I am not as I have been.

Leon. (L.) So say I! methinks you are sadder.

Claud. (R.) I hope, he be in love.

Pedro. Hang him, truant! there's no true drop of blood in him, to be truly touched with love: if he be sad, he wants money.

Ben. (L. C.) I have the tooth-ache.

Pedro. Draw it.

Ben. Hang it!

Pedro. What! sigh for the tooth-ache?

Leon. Which is but a humour, or a worm?

Ben. Well, every one can master a grief, but he that has it.

Claud. Yet say I, he is in love. If he be not in love with some woman, there is no believing of old signs; he brushes his hat o' mornings: what should that bode?

Pedro. Nay, he rubs himself with civet; can you smell him out by that?

Claud. That's as much as to say, the sweet youth's in love.

Pedro. The greatest note of it is his melancholy.

Claud. Nay, but his jesting spirit, which is now crept into a lutestring.

Pedro. Indeed, that tells a heavy tale for him: conclude, conclude he is in love.

Claud. Nay, but I know who loves him.

Pedro. That would I know too; I warrant, one that knows him not.

Claud. Yes, and his ill conditions; and, in despite of all dies for him.

Pedro. She shall be buried with her face upwards.

Ben. Yet this is no charm for the tooth-ache.—Old signior, [*To Leon.*] walk aside with me; [*Retiring,* R.] I have studied eight or nine wise words to speak to you, which these hobby-horses must not hear.

[*Exeunt Benedick and Leonato,* R.

Pedro. For my life, to break with him about Beatrice.

Claud. (L.) 'Tis even so: Hero and Margaret have, by this time, played their parts with Beatrice; and then the two bears will not bite one another, when they meet.

Enter DON JOHN, L.

John. (C.) My lord and brother, Heaven save you!

Pedro. Good den, brother.

John. If your leisure served, I would speak with you.

Pedro. In private?

John. If it please you;—yet Count Claudio may hear; for what I would speak of concerns him.

Pedro. What's the matter?

John. Means your lordship to be married to-morrow?

Pedro. You know he does.

John. I know not that, when he knows what I know.

Claud. If there be any impediment, I pray you, discover it.

John. You may think, I love you not; let that appear hereafter, and aim better at me by that I now will manifest: for my brother, I think he holds you well; and, in dearness of heart, hath holp to effect your ensuing marriage: surely, suit ill spent, and labour ill bestowed!

Pedro. Why, what's the matter?

John. I came hither to tell you, and, circumstances shortened, for she hath too long been a talking-of, the lady is disloyal.

Claud. Disloyal!

John. The word is too good to paint out her wickedness; I could say, she were worse; think you of a worse title, and I will fit her to it. Wonder not till farther warrant: go but with me to-night, you shall see her chamber

window entered; even the night before her wedding day; if you love her, then, to-morrow wed her; but it would better fit your honour to change your mind.

Claud. May this be so?

Pedro. I will not think it.—

John. If you dare not trust that you see, confess not that you know: if you will follow me, I will show you enough; and when you have seen more, and heard more, proceed accordingly.

Claud. If I see anything to-night why I should not marry her to-morrow, in the congregation, where I should wed, there will I shame her.

Pedro. And, as I wooed for thee to obtain her, I will join with thee to disgrace her.

John. I will disparage her no farther, till you are my witnesses: bear it coldly but till midnight, and let the issue show itself. [*Exeunt*, L.

SCENE III.—*The Street.*

Enter DOGBERRY, VERGES, SEACOAL, OATCAKE, *and Four* WATCHMEN, L. U. E.

Dog. (R. C.) Are you good men and true?

Ver. (C.) Yea, or else it were pity but they should suffer salvation, body and soul.

Dog. Nay, that were a punishment too good for them, if they should have any allegiance in them, being chosen for the prince's watch.

Ver. (L. C.) Well, give them their charge, neighbour Dogberry.

Dog. First, who think you the most desartless man to be constable?

Ver. Hugh Oatcake, sir, or George Seacoal; for they can write and read.

Dog. Come hither, neighbour Seacoal: heaven hath blessed you with a good name: to be a well favoured man is the gift of fortune; but to write and read comes by nature.

Sea. (R.) Both which, Master Constable,—

Dog. (C.) You have. I knew it would be your answer. Well, for your favour, sir, why, give heaven thanks, and make no boast of it; and for your writing and reading, let that appear when there is no need of such vanity.

You are thought here to be the most senseless and fit man for the constable of the watch; therefore, bear you the lantern. This is your charge: You shall comprehend all vagrom men; you are to bid any man stand, in the prince's name.

Sea. (R. C.) How if he will not stand?

Dog. Why, then take no note of him, but let him go; and presently call the rest of the watch together, and thank heaven you are rid of a knave.

Ver. If he will not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the prince's subjects.

Dog. True; and they are to meddle with none but the prince's subjects.—You shall also make no noise in the streets; for, for the watch to babble and talk, is most tolerable, and not to be endured.

Sea. We will rather sleep than talk; we know what belongs to a watch.

Dog. Why, you speak like an ancient and most quiet watchman; for I cannot see how sleeping should offend: only, have a care that your bills be not stolen:[9] Well, you are to call at all the alehouses, and bid those that are drunk get them to bed.

Sea. How if they will not?

Dog. Why, then, let them alone till they are sober; if they make you not then the better answer, you may say, they are not the men you took them for.

Sea. Well, sir.

Dog. If you meet a thief you may suspect him, by virtue of your office, to be no true man; and, for such kind of men, the less you meddle or make with them, why, the more is for your honesty.

Sea. If we know him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him?

Dog. Truly, by your office, you may; but I think, they that touch pitch will be defiled: the most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief, is, to let him show himself what he is, and steal out of your company.

Ver. You have been always called a merciful man, partner.

Dog. Truly, I would not hang a dog by my will; much more a man who hath any honesty in him.

Ver. If you hear a child cry in the night, you must call

to the nurse, and bid her still it.

Sea. How if the nurse be asleep, and will not hear us?

Dog. Why, then depart in peace, and let the child wake her with crying; for the ewe that will not hear her lamb when it baas, will never answer a calf when he bleats.

Ver. 'Tis very true.

Dog. This is the end of the charge. You, constable, are to present the prince's own person; if you meet the prince in the night, you may stay him.

Ver. Nay, by'r lady, that, I think, he cannot.

Dog. Five shillings to one on't, with any man, that knows the statues, he may stay him; marry, not without the prince be willing: for, indeed, the watch ought to offend no man; and it is an offence to stay a man against his will.

Ver. By'r lady, I think it be so.

Dog. Ha! ha! ha! Well, masters, good night: an there be any matter of weight chances, call up me: keep your fellows' counsels and your own, and good night.—Come, neighbour. [*Exeunt Dogberry and Verges,* L.

Sea. Well, masters, we hear our charge: let us go sit upon the church-bench till two, and then all to bed.

Re-enter DOGBERRY *and* VERGES, L.

Dog. One word more, honest neighbours: I pray you, watch about Signior Leonato's door; for the wedding being there to-morrow, there is a great coil to-night: Adieu! be vigilant, I beseech you.

[*Exeunt Dogberry and Verges,* L.

Enter BORACHIO, R

Bor. (R.) What, Conrade!—

Sea. [*Aside to his Party, on the* L.] Peace, stir not.

Bor. Conrade, I say!

Enter CONRADE, R.

Con. (R.) Here, man, I am at thy elbow.

Bor. Stand thee close, then; and I will, like a true drunkard, utter all to thee.

Sea. (L.) [*Aside.*] Some treason, masters; yet stand close.

Bor. Therefore know, I have earned of Don John a thousand ducats.

Con. Is it possible that any villainy should be so dear?

Bor. Thou should'st rather ask, if it were possible any villainy should be so rich; for, when rich villains have need of poor ones, poor ones may make what price they will.

Con. I wonder at it.

Bor. That shows thou art unconfirmed: thou knowest that the fashion of a doublet, or hat, or a cloak, is nothing to a man.

Con. Yes, it is apparel.

Bor. I mean the fashion.

Con. Yes, the fashion is the fashion.

Bor. Tush! I may as well say, the fool's the fool.—But seest thou not what a deformed thief this fashion is?

Sea. [*Aside, as before.*] I know that Deformed; he has been a vile thief these seven years; he goes up and down like a gentleman: I remember his name.

Bor. Didst thou not hear somebody?

Con. No; 'twas the vane on the house.

Bor. See'st thou not, I say, what a deformed thief this fashion is? how giddily he turns about all the hot bloods, between fourteen and five and thirty?

Cod. Art thou not thyself giddy with the fashion, too, that thou hast shifted out of thy tale into telling me of the fashion.

Bor. Not so, neither: but know, that I have to-night wooed Margaret, the Lady Hero's gentlewoman, by the name of Hero; she leans me out at her mistress' chamber window; bids me a thousand times good night—I tell this tale vilely:—I should first tell thee, how the Prince, Claudio, and my master, planted, and placed, and possessed by my master, Don John, saw afar off, in the orchard, this amiable encounter.

Con. And thought they, Margaret was Hero?

Bor. Two of them did, the Prince and Claudio;—[*Watchmen preparing to attack.*] but the devil, my master, knew she was Margaret: away went Claudio enraged; [*Watchmen advance.*] swore he would meet her, as he was appointed, next morning at the temple, and there, before the whole congregation, shame her with what he saw over night, and send her home again without a husband.

Sea. (R. C.) We charge you, in the Prince's name, stand!

Oat. (C.) Call up the right master constable. [*Exit a Watchman,* L.] We have here recovered the most dangerous piece of lechery ever was known in the commonwealth.

Sea. And one Deformed is one of them; I know him; he wears a lock.

Con. [*Seacoal and Watchman seize Bor. and Con.*] Masters, masters—

Sea. You'll be made bring Deformed forth, I warrant you.

Con. Masters—

Sea. Never speak; we charge you, let us obey you to go with us. [*Exeunt* L., *with prisoners in custody.*

SCENE IV.—*A Hall in Leonato's House.*

Enter LEONATO, DOGBERRY, *and* VERGES, R.

Leon. (L.) What would you with me, honest neighbour?

Dog. (C.) Marry, sir, I would have some confidence with you, that discerns you nearly.

Leon. Brief, I pray you; for you see 'tis a busy time with me.

Dog. Marry this it is, sir!

Ver. (C.) Yes, in truth it is, sir!

Leon. What is it, my good friends?

Dog. Goodman Verges, sir, speaks a little off the matter: an old man, sir, and his wits are not so blunt, as, Heaven help, I would desire they were! but, in faith, honest as the skin between his brows.

Ver. Yes, I thank Heaven, I am as honest as any man living, that is an old man, and no honester than I.

Dog. Comparisons are odorous: palabras,[10] neighbour Verges.

Leon. Neighbours, you are tedious.

Dog. It pleases your worship to say so, but we are the poor duke's officers; but, truly, for mine own part, if I were as tedious as a king, I could find in my heart to bestow it all of your worship.

Leon. All thy tediousness on me, ha?

Dog. Yea, an 'twere a thousand times more than 'tis;

for I hear as good exclamation on your worship, as of any man in the city; and though I be but a poor man, I am glad to hear it.

Ver. And so am I.

Leon. I would fain know what you have to say.

Ver. Marry, sir, our watch to-night, excepting your worship's presence, have ta'en a couple of as arrant knaves as any in Messina.

Dog. A good old man, sir;—he will be talking—as they say, When the age is in, the wit is out;—Heaven help us! it is a world to see! Well said, i'faith, neighbour Verges!—An two men ride of a horse, one must ride behind:—An honest soul, i'faith, sir! by my troth, he is, as ever broke bread! but, Heaven is to be worshipped—All men are not alike; alas, good neighbour!

Leon. Indeed, neighbour, he comes too short of you.

Dog. Gifts, that Heaven gives.

Leon. I must leave you. [*Crossing to* R.

Dog. One word, sir: our watch, sir, have, indeed, comprehended two aspicious persons, and we would have them examined this morning before your worship.

Leon. Take their examination yourself, and bring it me; I am now in great haste, as it may appear unto you.

Dog. It shall be suffigance.

Leon. Fare you well! [*Exit,* R.

Dog. Go, good partner, go, get you to Francis Seacoal, bid him bring his pen and inkhorn to the gaol; we are now to examination these men.

Ver. And we must do it wisely.

Dog. We will spare for no wit, I warrant you: here's that, [*Touching his forehead,*] shall drive some of them to a non-com: only get the learned writer to set down our excommunication, and meet me at the gaol. [*Exeunt,* L.

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Chapel.*

DON PEDRO, DON JOHN, LEONATO, FRIAR, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, HERO, *and* BEATRICE, *discovered.*

Leon. (C.) Come, Friar Francis, be brief; only to the plain form of marriage, and you shall recount their particular duties afterwards.

Friar. (R. C.) You come hither, my lord, to marry this lady?

Claud. (L. C.) No.

Leon. To be married to her, Friar; you come to marry her.

Friar. Lady, you come hither to be married to this Count?

Hero. (R. C.) I do.

Friar. If either of you know any inward impediment, why you should not be conjoined, I charge you, on your souls, to utter it.

Claud. Know you any, Hero?

Hero. None, my lord.

Friar. Know you any, Count?

Leon. I dare make his answer, none.

Claud. Oh, what men dare do! what men may do! what men daily do!

Bea. (L.) How now? Interjections?

Claud. Stand thee by, Friar:—Father, by your leave;
Will you, with free and unconstrainéd soul,
Give me this maid, your daughter?

Leon. As freely, son, as Heaven did give her me.

Claud. And what have I to give you back, whose worth
May counterpoise this rich and precious gift?

Pedro. Nothing, unless you render her again.

Claud. Sweet prince, you learn me noble thankfulness.—
There, Leonato, take her back again:
She's but the sign and semblance of her honour:
Behold, how like a maid she blushes here!
Her blush is guiltiness, not modesty.

Leon. (L. C.) What do you mean, my lord?
Claud. Not to be married,
Not knit my soul to an approvéd wanton—
Leon. Dear my lord, if you, in your own proof,
Have vanquished the resistance of her youth—
Claud. No, Leonato,
I never tempted her with word too large;
But, as a brother to a sister, showed
Bashful sincerity, and comely love.
Hero. And seemed I ever otherwise to you?
Claud. Out on thy seeming! I will write against it:
[*Benedick retires up the stage*
You seem to me as Dian in her orb:
As chaste, as is the bud ere it be blown;
But you are more intemperate in your blood
Than Venus, or those pampered animals,
That rage in savage sensuality.
Hero. Is my lord well, that he doth speak so wide?
Leon. Sweet prince, why speak not you?
Pedro. What should I speak?
I stand dishonoured, that have gone about
To link my dear friend to a wanton here.
Leon. Are these things spoken, or do I but dream?
John. Sir, they are spoken, and these things are true.
Hero. True, oh, Heaven!
Claud. Leonato, stand I here?
Is this the prince? Is this the prince's brother?
Is this face Hero's? Are our eyes our own?
Leon. All this is so; but what of this, my lord?
Claud. Let me but move one question to your daughter,
And, by that fatherly and kindly power
That you have in her, bid her answer truly.
Leon. I charge thee do so, as thou art my child!
Hero. Oh, Heaven defend me! how am I beset!—
What kind of catechizing call you this?
Claud. To make you answer truly to your name.
Hero. Is it not Hero? Who can blot that name
With any just reproach?
Claud. Marry, that can Hero;
Hero itself can blot out Hero's virtue.
What man was he, talked with you yesternight,
Out at your window, betwixt twelve and one?

Hero. I talked with no man at that hour, my lord.
Pedro. Leonato,
I am sorry, you must hear:—Upon mine honour,
Myself, my brother, and this grievéd Count,
Did see her, hear her, at that hour last night,
Talk with a ruffian at her chamber window;
Who hath, indeed, most like a liberal villain,
Confessed the vile encounters they have had
A thousand times in secret.
John. Fie! fie! they are
Not to be named, my lord, not to be spoke of;
There is not chastity enough in language,
Without offence to utter them: Thus, pretty lady,
I am sorry for thy much misgovernment.
Claud. Oh, Hero, what an angel had'st thou been
If half thy outward graces had been placed
About the thoughts and counsels of thy heart!
But, fare thee well, most foul, most fair! farewell!
For thee, I'll lock up all the gates of love,
And on my eye-lids shall conjecture hang,
To turn all beauty into thoughts of harm,
And never shall it more be gracious.
[*Hero swoons in the arms of Beatrice. Exeunt Don Pedro, Don John, and Claudio.*
Leon. Hath no man's dagger here a point for me?
Bea. Why, how now, cousin? wherefore sink you down?
Ben. [*Advancing to Hero and Beatrice.*] How doth the lady?
Bea. Dead, I think;—Help, uncle!
Hero! why, Hero! uncle! Signior Benedick! Friar!
Leon. Oh, fate, take not away thy heavy hand!
Death is the fairest cover for her shame,
That may be wished for.
Bea. How now, cousin Hero?
Friar. [*Advancing to* C.] Have comfort, lady.
Leon. Dost thou look up?
Friar. Yea; Wherefore should she not?
Leon. (L.) Wherefore? Why doth not every earthly thing.
Cry shame upon her? Could she here deny
The story, that is printed in her blood!"

Do not live, Hero: do not ope thine eyes:
For did I think thou wouldst not quickly die,
Thought I, thy spirits were stronger than thy shames,
Myself would, on the rearward of reproaches,
Strike at thy life. Grieved I, I had but one?
Chid I for that, at frugal Nature's frame?[12]
I've one too much by thee! Oh, she is fallen
Into a pit of ink! that the wide sea
Hath drops too few to wash her clean again!
Ben. (L. c.) Sir, sir, be patient!
For my part, I am so attired in wonder,
I know not what to say.
Bea. Oh, on my soul, my cousin is belied!
Ben. Lady, were you her bedfellow last night?
Bea. No, truly not; although until last night,
I have this twelvemonth been her bedfellow.
Leon. Confirmed, confirmed! Oh, that is stronger made,
Which was before barred up with ribs of iron!
Would the two princes lie? and Claudio lie?
Who loved her so, that, speaking of her foulness,
Washed it with tears? Hence! from her! let her die!
Friar. (c.) Hear me a little;
For I have only silent been so long,
And given way unto this course of fortune,
By noting of the lady: I have marked
A thousand blushing apparitions start
Into her face; a thousand innocent shames
In angel whiteness, bear away those blushes.
Call me a fool;
Trust not my reading, nor my observation,
If this sweet lady lie not guiltless here,
Under some biting error.
Leon. Friar, it cannot be:
Thou seest, that all the grace that she hath left,
Is, that she will not add to her damnation
A sin of perjury: she not denies it:
Why seek'st thou, then, to cover with excuse
That which appears in proper nakedness?
Friar. Lady, what man is he, you are accused of?
Hero. They know, that do accuse me: I know none:
If I know more of any man alive,

Than that which maiden modesty doth warrant,
Let all my sins lack mercy! [*Crosses*, L., *and kneels*,] Oh, my father,
Prove you that any man with me conversed
At hours unmeet, or that I yesternight
Maintained the change of words with any creature,
Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death.

Friar. (L. C.) There is some strange misprision in the Princes.

Ben. (L.) Two of them have the very bent of honour[12]
And if their wisdoms be misled in this,
The practice of it lives in John, the bastard,
Whose spirits toil in frame of villanies.

Leon. I know not; if they speak but truth of her,
These hands shall tear her; if they wrong her honour,
The proudest of them shall well hear of it.

Friar. Pause awhile,
And let my counsel sway you in this case.
Claudio has left your daughter here for dead;
Let her awhile be secretly kept in,
And publish it, that she is dead indeed.

Leon. What shall become of this? what will this do?

Friar. She dying, as it must be so maintained,
Upon the instant that she was accused,
Shall be lamented, pitied, and excused,
Of every hearer: So will it fare with Claudio:
When he shall hear she died upon his words,
The idea of her life shall sweetly creep
Into his study of imagination;
And every lovely organ of her life
Shall come apparelled in more precious habit,
Into the eye and prospect of his soul,
Than when she lived indeed: then shall he mourn,
And wish he had not so accused her;
No, though he thought his accusation true.
Let this be so, and doubt not, but success
Will fashion the event in better shape,
Than I can lay it down in likelihood.

Ben. Signior Leonato, let the Friar advise you:
And though, you know, my inwardness and love
Is very much unto the Prince and Claudio,
Yet, by mine honour, I will deal in this

As secretly, and justly, as your soul
Should with your body.

Leon. Being that I flow in grief,
The smallest twine may lead me.

Friar. 'Tis well consented; presently, away;
Come, lady, die, to live: this wedding-day,
Perhaps, is but prolonged; have patience, and endure.

[*Exeunt*, R., *all but Benedick and Beatrice.*

Ben. (R. C.) Lady Beatrice, have you wept all this while?

Bea. (C.) Yea, and I will weep awhile longer.

Ben. [*Advances to her.*] I will not desire that.

Bea. You have no reason: I do it freely.

Ben. Surely, I do believe your fair cousin is wronged.

Bea. Ah, how much might the man deserve of me, that would right her!

Ben. Is there any way to show such friendship?

Bea. A very even way, but no such friend.

Ben. May a man do it?

Bea. It is a man's office, but not yours.

Ben. [*Pausing.*] I do love nothing in the world so well as you: [*Takes her hand.*
Is not that strange?

Bea. As strange as the thing I know not: It were as possible for me to say, I loved nothing so well as you but, believe me not; and yet I lie not; I confess nothing, nor I deny nothing:—I am sorry for my cousin.

Ben. By my sword, Beatrice, thou lovest me!

Bea. Do not swear by it, and eat it.

Ben. I will swear by it, that you love me; and I will make him eat it, that says I love not you.

Bea. Will you not eat your word?

Ben. With no sauce that can be devised to it: I protest I love thee!

Bea. Why, then, Heaven forgive me!

Ben. What offence, sweet Beatrice?

Bea. You have stayed me in an happy hour: I was about to protest I loved you.

Ben. And do it, with all thy heart!

Bea. I love you with so much of my heart, that none is left to protest.

Ben. Come, bid me do anything for thee.

Bea. Kill Claudio.

Ben. Ha! not for the wide world!

Bea. You kill me to deny it:—Farewell! [*Going*, R.

Ben. Tarry, sweet Beatrice!

Bea. I am gone, though I am here:—There is no love in you:—nay, I pray you, let me go.

Ben. Beatrice,—

Bea. In faith, I will go!

Ben. [*Follows and pulls her back.*] We'll be friends first.

Bea. You dare easier be friends with me, than fight with mine enemy.

Ben. Is Claudio thine enemy?

Bea. Is he not approved in the height a villain, that hath slandered, scorned, dishonoured my kinswoman?—Oh, that I were a man!—What! bear her in hand until they come to take hands, and then, with public accusation, uncovered slander, unmitigated rancour!—Oh, Heaven, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market-place!

Ben. Hear me, Beatrice.

Bea. Talk with a man out at a window?—a proper saying!

Ben. Nay, but Beatrice—

Bea. Sweet Hero!—she is wronged, she is slandered, she is undone!

Ben. Beat—

Bea. Princes and counties! Surely, a princely testimony, a goodly count-confect—a sweet gallant, surely! Oh, that I were a man, for his sake! or that I had any friend would be a man for my sake! But manhood is melted into courtesies, valour into compliment, and men are only turned into tongue, and trim ones, too:—He is now as valiant as Hercules, that only tells a lie, and swears it: I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I will die a woman with grieving.

Ben. Tarry, good Beatrice: By this hand, I love thee!

Bea. Use it for my love some other way than swearing by it.

Ben. Think you, in your soul, the Count Claudio hath wronged Hero?

Bea. Yea, as sure as I have a thought, or a soul!

Ben. Enough, I am engaged; [*Puts on his hat.*] I will challenge him.

Bea. Will you?

Ben. Upon my soul I will. I'll kiss your hand, and so leave you. By this hand, Claudio shall render me a dear account.

Bea. You'll be sure to challenge him?

Ben. By those bright eyes, I will.

Bea. My dear friend, kiss my hand again.

Ben. As you hear of me, so think of me. Go, comfort your cousin: I must say she is dead, and so farewell.

Bea. Benedick, kill him, kill him, if you can.

Ben. As sure as he is alive, I will.

[*Exeunt, Beatrice,* R., *Benedick,* L.

SCENE II.—*A Prison.*

DOGBERRY, VERGES, SEACOAL, *and* OATCAKE *discovered, seated.—Dogberry and part of the Watch* L. *of Table, Prisoners and other Watchmen,* R.

Dog. Is our whole dissembly appeared?

Enter SEXTON, L.

Ver. Oh, a stool and a cushion for the sexton

Sex. Which be the malefactors?

Dog. Marry, that am I and my partner.

Ver. Nay, that's certain; we have the exhibition to examine.

Sex. But which are the offenders that are to be examined? let them come before Master Constable.

Dog. Yea, marry, let them come before me.

Enter WATCH, *bringing in* BORACHIO *and* CONRADE, R.

What is your name, friend?

Bor. Borachio.

Dog. Pray write down Borachio.—Yours, sirrah?

Con. I am a gentleman, and my name is Conrade.

Dog. Write down Master Gentleman Conrade.—Masters, do you serve Heaven?

Bor. & Con. Yes, sir, we hope.

Dog. Write down, that they hope they serve Heaven—and write Heaven first; for Heaven defend but Hea-

ven should go before such villains! Masters, it is proved already, that you are little better than false knaves; and it will go near to be thought so shortly. How answer you for yourselves?

Con. Marry, sir, we are none.

Dog. A marvellous witty fellow, I assure you!—but I will go about with him.—Come you hither, sirrah! a word in your ear sir: I say to you, it is thought you are false knaves.

Bor Sir, I say to you, we are none.

Dog. Well, stand aside—'Fore Heaven, they are both in a tale!—Have you writ down, that they are none?

Sex. Master Constable, you go not the way to examine; you must call the watch, that are their accusers.

Dog. Yea, marry, that's the eftest way:—Let the watch stand forth:—Masters, I charge you, in the Prince's name, to accuse these men!

Sea. This man said, sir, that Don John, the Prince's brother, was a villain.

Dog. Write down,—Prince John, a villain:—Why, that is flat perjury, to call a Prince's brother, villain!

Bor. Master Constable—

Dog. 'Pray thee, fellow, peace! I do not like thy look, I promise thee.

Sex. What heard you him say else?

Oat. Marry, that he had received a thousand ducats of Don John, for accusing the Lady Hero wrongfully.

Dog. Flat burglary, as ever was committed!

Ver. Yea, by the mass, that it is!

Sex. What else, fellow?

Sea. And that Count Claudio did mean, upon his words, to disgrace Hero before the whole assembly, and not marry her.

Dog. O villain! thou wilt be condemned into everlasting redemption for this.

Sex. What else?

Sea. This is all.

Sex. And this is more, masters, than you can deny. Prince John is this morning secretly stolen away: Hero was in this manner accused, in this very manner refused, and upon the grief of this, suddenly died.—Master Con-

stable, let these men be bound, and brought to Leonato's. I will go before, and show him their examination.

[*Exit*, R.

Dog. (R.) Come, let them be opinioned.—Come, bind them.—Thou naughty varlet!

Con. Away, you are an ass! you are an ass!

Dog. Dost thou not suspect my place? Dost thou not suspect my years? Oh, that he were here, to write me down an ass!—but, masters, remember that I am an ass; though it be not written down, yet forget not, that I am an ass:—No, thou villain, thou art full of piety, as shall be proved upon thee, by good witness!—I am a wise fellow; and, which is more, an officer; and, which is more, a householder; and, which is more, as pretty a piece of flesh as any in Messina; and one that knows the law, go to; and a rich fellow enough, go to; and a fellow that hath had losses: and one that hath two gowns, and everything handsome about him:—Bring him away. Oh, that I had been writ down—an ass! [*Exeunt*, R.

END OF ACT V.

ACT VI.

SCENE I.—*The Court before Leonato's House, same as Act I., Scene I.*

Enter LEONATO *and* ANTONIO.

Ant. (L.) If you go on thus, you will kill yourself;
And 'tis not wisdom thus to second grief
Against yourself.

Leon. (L. C.) I pray thee, cease thy counsel;
Nor let no comforter delight mine ear,
But such a one whose wrongs do suit with mine,
Bring me a father, that so loved his child,
Whose joy of her is overwhelmed like mine,
And bid him speak of patience;—
No, no; 'tis all men's office to speak patience,
To those that wring under the load of sorrow;
But no man's virtue, nor sufficiency,
To be so moral, when he shall endure

The like himself; therefore give me no counsel.
Ant. Therein do men from children nothing differ.
Leon. I pray thee, peace; I will be flesh and blood;
For there was never yet philosopher
That could endure the tooth-ache patiently;
However they have writ the style of gods,
And made a pish at chance and sufferance.
Ant. Yet bend not all the harm upon yourself;
Make those who do offend you, suffer too.
Leon. There thou speak'st reason; nay, I will do so;
My soul doth tell me, Hero is belied;
And that shall Claudio know, so shall the Prince,
And all of them, that thus dishonour her.
Ant. Here comes the Prince and Claudio, hastily.

Enter DON PEDRO *and* CLAUDIO, L., *and cross,* R.

Pedro. Good den, good den.
Claud. Good day to both of you.
Leon. Hear you, my lords—
Pedro. We have some haste, Leonato.
Leon. Some haste, my lord!—well, fare you well, my lord:
Are you so hasty now?—well, all is one.
Pedro. (R.) Nay, do not quarrel with us, good old man
Ant. If he could right himself with quarreling,
Some of us would lie low.
Claud. (R.) Who wrongs him?
Leon. Marry, thou dost wrong me, thou dissembler, thou!
Nay, never lay thy hand upon thy sword—
I fear thee not.
Claud. Marry, beshrew my hand,
If it should give your age such cause of fear!
In faith, my hand meant nothing to my sword.
Leon. Tush, tush, man! Never fleer and jest at me!
I speak not like a dotard, nor a fool,
As, under privilege of age, to brag
What I have done being young, or what would do,
Were I not old. Know, Claudio, to thy head,
Thou hast so wronged my innocent child and me,
That I am forced to lay my reverence by;
And, with grey hairs, and bruise of many days,

Do challenge thee to trial of a man;
[*Going*, C., *and drawing his sword*
I say, thou hast belied my innocent child.
Pedro. Yon say not right, old man.
Lean. My lord, my lord,
I'll prove it on his body, if he dare;
Despite his nice fence, and his active practice,
His May of youth, and bloom of lustyhood.
Claud. Away, I will not have to do with you!
Leon. Canst thou so daff me?
Ant. Let him answer me:
Come, follow me, boy; come, boy, follow me,
Sir boy, I'll whip you from your foining fence;
Nay, as I am a gentleman, I will!
Leon. (C.) Brother—
Ant. (C.) Boys, apes, braggarts, jacks, milksops!
That dare as well answer a man, indeed,
As I dare take a serpent by the tongue?
Leon. Brother Antony—
Ant. Hold you content! What, man! I know them yea,
And what they weigh, even to the utmost scruple;
Scambling, outfacing, fashion-mong'ring boys,
That lie, and cog, and flout, deprave and slander,
And speak off half a dozen dangerous words,
How they might hurt their enemies, if they durst,
And this is all.
Leon. But, brother Anthony—
Ant. Come, 'tis no matter;
Do not you meddle—let me deal in this.
Pedro. (R. C.) Gentlemen both, we will not wake your patience.
My heart is sorry for your daughter's death;
Cut, on my honour, she was charged with nothing
But what was true, and very full of proof.
Leon. My lord, my lord—
Pedro. I will not hear you.
Leon. No?
Brother, away: I will be heard!
Ant. And shall,
Or some of us will smart for it.
[*Exeunt Leonato and Antonio through gate in back scene.*

Pedro. See, see,
Here comes the man we went to seek!

Enter BENEDICK, L.

Claud. (C.) Now, Signior,
What news?

Ben. (L.) Good day, my lord.

Pedro. Welcome, Signior!
You are almost come to part almost a fray.

Claud. We had like to have had our two noses snapped off, with two old men without teeth.

Pedro. Leonato and his brother. What think'st thou? Had we fought, I doubt, we should have been too young for them.

Ben. In a false quarrel, there is no true valour. I came to seek you both.

Claud. We have been up and down to seek thee, for we are high proof melancholy, and would fain have it beaten away: Wilt thou use thy wit?

Ben. (L. C.) It is in my scabbard; shall I draw it?

Pedro. As I am an honest man, he looks pale!—Art thou sick, or angry?

Claud. What! courage, man! What, though care killed a cat, thou hast metal enough in thee to kill care.

Ben. Sir, I shall meet your wit in the career, if you charge it against me; I pray you, choose another subject. I don't like it.

Pedro. By this light, he changes more and more! I think, he be angry indeed! [*Retires up the Stage.*

Claud. If he be, he knows how to turn his girdle.

Ben. Shall I speak a word in your ear?

Claud. Heaven bless me from a challenge!

Ben. You are a villain! I jest not—I will make it good, how you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare: —Do me right, or I will protest your cowardice. You have killed a sweet lady, and her death shall fall heavy on you! Let me hear from you.

Claud. Well, I will meet you so I may have good cheer.

Pedro. [*Advancing.*] What, a feast, a feast!

Claud. I'faith, I thank him, he hath bid me to a calf's head; the which, if I do not carve most curiously, say my knife's naught.

Ben. Sir, your wit ambles well; it goes easily.

Pedro. But when shall we set the savage bull's horns on the sensible Benedick's head?

Claud. Yea, and text underneath: Here dwells Benedick, the married man? [*Goes,* R. C., *and turns.*

Ben. Fare you well, boy! you know my mind—I will leave you now to your gossip-like humour: you break jests as braggarts do their blades, which, Heaven be thanked, hurt not!—My lord, [*Takes off his hat,*] for your many courtesies, I thank you—I must discontinue your company: your brother, the bastard, is fled from Messina; you have, among you, killed a sweet and innocent lady: For my Lord Lackbeard there, he and I shall meet, and till then, peace be with him! Let me hear from you. [*Exit,* L.

Pedro. He is in earnest.

Claud. In most profound earnest; and, I'll warrant you, for the love of Beatrice!

Pedro. And hath challenged thee?

Claud. Most sincerely!

Pedro. What a pretty thing man is, when he goes in his doublet and hose, and leaves off his wit![14] Did he not say, my brother was fled?

Enter DOGBERRY, VERGES, *with* CONRADE *and* BORACHIO *bound, followed by* SEACOAL, OATCAKE *and the* WATCH, L. *Pedro and Claudio stand* R.

Dog. (C.) Come you, sir! if justice cannot tame you, she shall ne'er weigh more reasons in her balance: nay, an' you be a cursing hypocrite once, you must be looked to.

Pedro. How now? two of my brother's men bound! Borachio one!

Claud. Hearken after their offence, my lord.

Pedro. Officers, what offence have these men done?

Dog. Marry, sir, they have committed false report; moreover, they have spoken untruths; secondarily, they are slanders: sixth and lastly, they have belied a lady: thirdly, they have verified unjust things: and, to conclude, they are lying knaves.

Pedro. First, I ask thee, what they have done; thirdly, I ask thee what's their offence; sixth and lastly, why they

are committed; and, to conclude, what you lay to their charge.

Claud. (R.) Rightly reasoned, and in his own division

Pedro. Whom have you offended, masters, that you are thus bound to your answer? this learned constable is too cunning to be understood: What's your offence?

Bor. (L.) Sweet prince, let me go no further to mine answer; do you hear me, and let this count kill me. I have deceived even your very eyes: what your wisdoms could not discover, these shallow fools have brought to light: who, in the night, overheard me confessing to this man, how Don John, your brother, incensed me to slander the Lady Hero; how you were brought into the orchard, and saw me court Margaret, in Hero's garments; how you disgraced her, when you should marry her: my villainy they have upon record, which I had rather seal with my death, than repeat over to my shame: the lady is dead, upon mine and my master's false accusation; and, briefly, I desire nothing but the reward of a villain.

Pedro. [*To Claudio.*] Runs not this speech like iron through your blood?

Claud. I have drunk poison whiles he uttered it!

Pedro. But did my brother set thee on to this?

Bor. Yea, and paid me richly for the practice of it.

Pedro. He is composed and framed of treachery: and fled he is upon this villainy.

Claud. Sweet Hero! now thy image doth appear in the rare semblance that I loved it first.

Dog. Come, bring away the plaintiffs; by this time, our sexton hath reformed Signior Leonato of the matter; And, masters, do not forget to specify, when time and place shall serve, that I am an ass.

Ver. Here comes Master Signior Leonato and the Sexton too.

Enter LEONATO, SERVANTS, *and* SEXTON, L.

Leon. Which is the villain? Let me see his eyes:
That, when I note another man like him,
I may avoid him: Which of these is he?

Bor. If you would know your wronger, look on me.

Leon. Art thou the slave that, with thy breath, hast killed

Mine innocent child?
Bor. Yea, even I alone.
Leon. No, not so, villain! thou beliest thyself;
Here stand a pair of honourable men,—
A third is fled, that had a hand in it:
[*Turning to Claudio and Pedro.*
I thank you, princes, for my daughter's death;
Record it with your high and worthy deeds;
Twas bravely done, if you bethink you of it.
Claud. I know not how to pray your patience,
Yet I must speak: Choose your revenge yourself;
Impose me to what penance your invention
Can lay upon my sin: yet sinned I not,
But in mistaking.
Pedro. By my soul, nor I;
And yet, to satisfy this good old man,
I would bend under any heavy weight
That he'll enjoin me to.
Leon. (L. C.) I cannot bid you bid my daughter live,
That were impossible; but, I pray you both,
Possess the people in Messina here,
How innocent she died;
To-morrow morning, come you to my house;
And, since you could not be my son-in-law,
Be yet my nephew: my brother hath a daughter,
Almost a copy of my child that's dead,
And she alone is heir to both of us;
Give her the right you should have given her cousin,
And so dies my revenge.
Claud. Oh, noble sir,
Your over kindness doth wring tears from me!
I do embrace your offer, and dispose
For henceforth of poor Claudio.
Leon. (R.) To-morrow, then, I will expect your coming,
To-night I take my leave. [*Exeunt Pedro and Claudio,* R.
This naughty man
Shall face to face be brought to Margaret,
Who, I believe, was packed in all this wrong.
Bor. No, by soul, she was not;
Nor knew not what she did, when she spoke to me;
But always hath been just and virtuous,
In anything that I do know by her.

Dog. Moreover, sir, which, indeed, is not under white and black, this plaintiff here, the offender, did call me ass: I beseech you, let it be remembered in his punishment; and also the watch heard him talk of one Deformed—pray you examine him upon that point.

Leon. (c.) I thank thee for thy care and honest pains.

Dog. Your worship speaks like a most thankful and reverend youth; and I praise heaven for you!

Leon. There's for thy pains.

Dog. Heaven save the foundation!

Leon. Go, I discharge thee of thy prisoners, and I thank thee.

Dog. I leave an arrant knave with your worship; which I beseech your worship to correct yourself, for the example of others. Heaven keep your worship—I wish your worship well. Heaven restore you to health! I humbly give you leave to depart; and, if a merry meeting may be wished, Heaven prohibit it! Come, neighbour. [*Exeunt Dogberry, Verges, Sexton, Seacoal, Oatcake, and the Watch,* L.

Leon. [*To Servants.*] Bring you these fellows on; we'll talk with Margaret,
How her acquaintance grew with this lewd fellow.
[*Exeunt through the court gate.*

Scene II.—*A Hall in Leonato's House.*

Enter Benedick *and* Margaret, L.

Ben. (L. c.) 'Pray thee, sweet Mistress Margaret, deserve well at my hands, by helping me to the speech of Beatrice.

Mar. (c.) Will you then write me a sonnet in praise of my beauty?

Ben. In so high a style, Margaret, that no man living shall come over it; for, in most comely truth, thou deservest it!

Mar. To have no man come over me? why, shall I always keep below stairs?

Ben. Thy wit is as quick as the greyhound's mouth, it catches.

Mar. And yours as blunt as the fencer's foils, which hit, but hurt not.

Ben. A most manly wit, Margaret: it will not hurt a woman: and so, I pray thee, call Beatrice.

Mar. Well, I will call Beatrice to you. [*Exit*, R.

Ben. [*Sings.*] The God of Love,
That sits above,
And knows me, and knows me,
How pitiful I deserve,—

I mean in singing; but in loving, Leander, the good swimmer, Troilus, the first employer of panders, and a whole book full of these quondam carpet-mongers, whose names yet run smoothly in the even road of a blank verse, why, they were never so truly turned over and over, as my poor self, in love. Marry, I cannot show it in rhyme; I have tried; I can find out no rhyme to lady but baby, an innocent rhyme; for school, fool, a babbling rhyme; for scorn, horn, a hard rhyme; very ominous endings! No, I was not born under a rhyming planet, for I cannot woo in festival terms.—

Enter BEATRICE, R.

Sweet Beatrice, would'st thou come when I called thee?

Bea. (R. C.) Yea, signior, and depart when you bid me.

Ben. O, stay but till then!

Bea. Then, is spoken; fare you well now:—and yet, ere I go, let me go with that I came for, which is, with knowing what hath past between you and Claudio.

Ben. Claudio undergoes my challenge; and either I must shortly hear from him, or I will subscribe him a coward. And, I pray thee now, tell me, for which of my bad parts did thou first fall in love with me?

Bea. For them all together; which maintained so politic a state of evil, that they will not admit any good part to intermingle with them. But for which of my good parts did you first suffer love for me?

Ben. Suffer love! a good epithet! I do suffer love, indeed, for I love thee against my will.

Bea. In spite of your heart, I think; alas, poor heart! If you spite it for my sake, I will spite it for yours; for I will never love that which my friend hates.

Ben. Thou and I are too wise to woo peaceably.

Bea. It appears not in this confession; there's not one wise man among twenty that will praise himself.

Ben. An old, an old instance, Beatrice, that lived in the time of good neighbours—if a man do not erect, in this age, his own tomb ere he dies, he shall live no longer in monument than the bell rings and the widow weeps.

Bea. And how long is that, think you?

Ben. Why, an hour in clamour, and a quarter in rheum; And now tell me, how doth your cousin?

Bea. Very ill.

Ben. And how do you?

Bea. Very ill, too.

Ben. Serve heaven, love me, and mend.
Here comes one in haste.

Enter URSULA, L.

Urs. Madam, you must come to your uncle; it is proved my Lady Hero hath been falsely accused, the Prince and Claudio mightily abused; and Don John is the author of all, who is fled and gone. [*Exit*, L.

Bea. Will you go hear this news, signior?

Ben. I will live in thy eyes, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy heart; and, moreover, I will go with thee to thy uncle. [*Exeunt*, L.

SCENE III.—*A Room in Leonato's House.*

Enter LEONATO, HERO, FRIAR, ANTONIO, BENEDICK, BEATRICE, URSULA, *and other Ladies*, R.

Friar. (L. C.) Did not I tell you she was innocent?

Leon. (L.) So are the Prince and Claudio, who accused her,
Upon the error that you heard debated:
But Margaret was in some fault for this;
Although against her will, as it appears.

Ant. (R.) Well, I am glad that all things sort so well.

Ben. (C.) And so am I, being else by faith enforced
To call young Claudio to a reckoning for it.

Leon. [*To the Ladies, who stand*, R.] Well, daughte and you gentlewomen all,
Withdraw into a chamber by yourselves;

And, when I send for you, come hither masked:
The Prince and Claudio promised by this hour
To visit me. [*Exeunt Hero, Beatrice, and all the Ladies,* R.
You know your office, brother;
You must be father to your brother's daughter,
And give her to young Claudio.

Ant. Which I will do with a confirméd countenance.

Ben. Friar, I must entreat your pains, I think.

Friar. To do what, Signior?

Ben. To bind me, or undo me, one of them.
Signior Leonato, truth it is, good Signior,
Your neice regards me with an eye of favour.

Leon. That eye my daughter lent her: 'tis most true.

Ben. And I do with an eye of love requite her.

Leon. The sight whereof, I think, you had from me,
From Claudio and the Prince: but what's your will?

Ben. Your answer, sir, is enigmatical:
But, for my will, my will is, your good-will
May stand with ours, this day to be conjoined
In the estate of honourable marriage;—
In which, good friar, I shall desire your help.

Leon. My heart is with your liking.

Friar. And my help.
Here come the Prince and Claudio.

Enter DON PEDRO *and* CLAUDIO, L.

Pedro. Good morrow to this fair assembly.

Leon. We here attend you; Are you yet determined
To-day to marry with my brother's daughter?

Claud. I'll hold my mind, were she an Ethiope.

Leon. Call her forth, brother: Here's the friar ready.
[*Exit Antonio.*

Pedro. Good morrow, Benedick: Why, what's the matter,
That you have such a February face,
So full of frost, of storm, and cloudiness?

Ben. Oh, here they come!

Enter ANTONIO, *with* HERO, BEATRICE, URSULA, *and other Ladies, masked,* R.

Claud. (R. C.) Which is the lady I must seize upon?

Ant. (R.) This same is she, and I do give you her.
[*Presenting Hero.*

Claud. Why, then she's mine: Sweet, let me see your face.

Leon. No, that you shall not, till you take her hand
Before this friar, and swear to marry her.

Claud. Give me your hand before this holy friar;
I am your husband if you like of me.

Hero. And when I lived, I was your other wife;
[*Unmasking.*
And when you loved, you were my other husband.

Claud. Another Hero?

Hero. Nothing certainer:
One Hero died defiled, but I do live,
And, surely as I live, I am innocent.

Pedro. The former Hero! Hero, that is dead!

Leon. She died, my lord, but whiles her slander lived.

Friar. All this amazement can I qualify;
When, after that the holy rites are ended,
I'll tell you largely of fair Hero's death:
Meantime, let wonder seem familiar,
And to the chapel let us presently.

Ben. (L. c.) Soft and fair, Friar. Which is Beatrice?

Bea. (L. c.) I answer to that name.
[*Beatrice and the other Ladies unmask.*
What is your will?

Ben. Do not you love me?

Bea. No, no more than reason.

Ben. Why, then, your uncle, and the Prince, and Claudio,
Have been deceived, for they swore you did.

Bea. Do not you love me?

Ben. No, no more than reason.

Bea. Why, then, my cousin, Margaret, and Ursula,
Are much deceived, for they did swear you did.

Ben. They swore that you were almost sick for me.

Bea. They swore that you were well nigh dead for me.

Ben. 'Tis no such matter:—Then, you do not love me!

Ben. No, truly, but in friendly recompense.

Leon. Come, cousin, I am sure you love the gentleman.

Claud. And I'll be sworn upon't that he loves her;
For here's a paper, written in his hand,
A halting sonnet of his own pure brain,
Fashioned to Beatrice. [*Gives the paper to Beatrice.*

Hero. And here's another,
Writ in my cousin's hand, stolen from her pocket,
Containing her affection unto Benedick.

[*Gives the paper to Ben. and retires,* R. *of Claudio.*

Ben. A miracle!—here's our own hands against our hearts! Come, I will have thee; but, by this light, I take thee for pity!

Bea. I would not deny you;—but, by this good day, I yield upon great persuasion; and partly to save your life; for I was told you were in a consumption.

Ben. Peace, I will stop your mouth.—

Pedro. How dost thou, Benedick, the married man?

Ben. I'll tell thee what, Prince, a college of wit-crackers cannot flout me out of my humour: Dost thou think I care for a satire or an epigram? No; if a man will be beaten with brains, he shall wear nothing handsome about him. In brief, since I do purpose to marry, I will think nothing to any purpose that the world can say against it; and therefore never flout at me for what I have said against it; for man is a giddy thing, and this is my conclusion.

Enter OFFICER, L.

Offi. My lord, your brother John is ta'en in flight,
And brought with armèd men back to Messina.

Pedro. I think not on him till to-morrow; I'll devise brave punishments for him. [*Exit Officer,* L.

Ben. Claudio, I did think to have beaten thee; but in that thou art like to be my kinsman, live unbruised, and love my cousin.

Claud. I had well hoped thou wouldst have denied Beatrice, that I might have cudgelled thee out of thy single life, to make thee a double-dealer, which, out of question thou wilt be, if my cousin do not look narrowly to thee.

Ben. Come, come, we are friends. Prince, thou art sad.

Pedro. Yes, I've got the tooth-ache.

Ben Got the tooth-ache! Get thee a wife, and all will be well. Nay, laugh not, laugh not.—

Your gibes and mockeries I laugh to scorn;
No staff more rev'rend than one tipt with horn.[15]

THE END.

NOTES TO MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

(1) —— *fathers herself :*] This phrase is common in Dorsetshire: "Jack *fathers* himself;" i. e. is like his father.

(2) ——*but that I will have a* recheat *winded in my forehead.*] That is, *I will wear a horn on my forehead which the huntsman may blow.* A *recheate* is the sound by which dogs are called back.—JOHNSON.

(3) —— *in a bottle like a cat.*] In some counties in England, a cat was formerly closed up with a quantity of soot in a wooden bottle, (such as that in which shepherds carry their liquor,) and was suspended on a line. He who beat out the bottom as he ran under it, and was nimble enough to escape its contents, was regarded as the hero of this inhuman diversion.—STEEVENS.

(4) —— *usurer's* chain?] *Chains* of gold, of considerable value, were, in our author's time, usually worn by wealthy citizens and others; and it appears that the merchants were the chief usurers of the age.

(5) *Stalk on, stalk on; the fowl sits.*] An allusion to the *stalking-horse;* a horse either real or factitious, by which the fowler anciently sheltered himself from the sight of the game.

(6) ——*but that she loves him with an enraged affection,—it is past the* infinite of thought.] The meaning I think is,—*but with what an enraged affection she loves him, it is beyond the power of thought to conceive.*—MALONE.

(7) *Taming my* wild *heart to thy loving hand;* This image is taken from falconry. She had been charged with being as wild as *haggards of the rock;* she therefore says, that *wild* as her *heart* is, she will *tame* it *to the hand.* JOHNSON.

(8) ——Dogberry *and* Verges.] The first of these worthies had his name from the *Dog-berry*, i. e. the female cornel, a shrub that grows in the hedges in every county of England. *Verges* is only the provincial pronunciation of *Verjuice.*

(9) —— bills *be not stolen :*] A *bill* is still carried by the watchmen at Lichfield. It was the old weapon of English infantry, which, says Temple, *gave the most ghastly and deplorable wounds.* It may be called *securis falcata.*—JOHNSON.

(10) ——*palabras.*] So, in *The Taming of the Shrew*, the tinker says, *pocas palabras*, i. e. few words. A scrap of Spanish, which might once have been current among the vulgar.

(11) *The story that is printed in her blood ?*] That is, *the story which her blushes discover to be true.*

(12) *Chid I for that at frugal nature's* frame ?] Grieved I at nature's being so *frugal* as to have *framed* for me only one child ?

(13) ——bent *of honor ;*] *Bent* is used by our author for the utmost degree of any passion or mental quality. In this play before, Benedick says of Beatrice, *her affection has its full bent.*

(14) *What a pretty thing man is, when he goes in his doublet and hose, and leaves off his wit !*] Perhaps the meaning is :—What an inconsistent fool is man, when he covers his body with clothes, and at the same time divests himself of his understanding !

(15) This play may be justly said to contain two of the most sprightly characters that Shakspeare ever drew. The wit, the humorist, the gentleman and the soldier, are combined in Benedick. It is to be lamented, indeed, that the first and most splendid of these distinctions is disgraced by unnecessary profaneness ; for the goodness of his heart is hardly sufficient to atone for the license of his tongue. The too sarcastic levity which flashes out in the conversation of Beatrice, may be excused on account of the steadiness and friendship so apparent in her behavior, when she urges her lover to risk his life by a challenge to Claudio. In the conduct of the fable, however, there is an imperfection similar to that which Dr. Johnson has pointed out in *The Merry Wives of Windsor :*—the second contrivance is less ingenious than the first : —or, to speak more plainly, the same incident is become stale by repetition. I wish some other method had been found to entrap Beatrice, than that very one which before had been successfully practised on Benedick.—STEEVENS.

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